

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: 15 June 2017

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Members: Councillors: M McKay (Chair), H Burrell, D Cullen, G Lawrence and G Snell

In Attendance: C Wood – Shared Internal Audit Service

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 6:40 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair welcomed Councillor G Snell as a new member of the Committee.

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors R Broom, L Chester and J Gardner and Independent Member B Mitchell.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair invited nominations for the post of Vice-Chair and informed the Committee that Councillor J Gardner had expressed an interest in the post.

Councillor J Gardner was proposed and seconded for the post of Vice-Chair.

There being no further nominations it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor J Gardner is appointed as Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee for the 2017/2018 Municipal Year.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was **RESOLVED** that the terms of reference of the Audit Committee are noted.

4. MINUTES – AUDIT COMMITTEE – 28 MARCH 2017

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 March 2017 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. 2016/2017 ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT AND INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report on the 2016/2017 Annual Governance Statement and the Internal Audit Annual Report.

The Internal Auditor advised the Committee of a typographical error in the report. Pages 9 to 12 of the report should be headed 'Appendix A' and not 'Appendix B' as shown.

In response to a request from the Internal Auditor the Assistant Director (Finance), as the Council's S151 Officer, confirmed that the scope and resources for internal audit were subject to no inappropriate limitations in 2016/2017.

In reply to a Member request the Assistant Director (Finance) advised the Committee that the appropriate Assistant Director could be invited to future meetings to provide an update on the Cyber Risk report should the Committee wish.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Annual Assurance Statement and Internal Audit Annual Report are noted
2. That the results of the self-assessment as required by both the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme are noted
3. That the Shared Internal Audit Service Audit Charter 2017/2018 is accepted
4. That assurance is accepted that the scope and resources for internal audit were subject to no inappropriate limitations in 2016/2017.

6. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report detailing progress against the Council's Internal Audit Plan 2017/2018 for the period 1 April 2017 to 27 May 2017.

The Committee was advised that since the report had been published the Terms of Reference for the Repairs and Voids Service Report had been agreed and a scope and start date agreed.

In reply to a question the Committee was advised that the restructure of the Shared Internal Audit Service had been initiated to meet the changing needs of client authorities.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Internal Audit Progress Report for the period to 27 May 2017 is noted.

7. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2016/2017

The Assistant Director (Finance) presented the Council's Annual Governance Statement and advised the Committee that it would be published alongside the Council's accounts to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control and governance arrangements.

In reply to a question concerning actions carried over from 2016/2017 relating to the implementation of changes in Housing working practices to reflect the legal requirements of the Housing and Planning Act the Committee was advised that implementation was dependent on secondary legislation to define a number of key issues. The Council had yet to be advised of a date for such legislation.

The Chair requested that the Minutes record the Committee's thanks to the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager for a concise, informative and easy to read report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council's 2016/2017 Annual Governance Statement, attached as Appendix One to the report, is recommended for approval by the Statement of Accounts Committee.

8. LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Committee received a report which detailed the content of the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance from 2017/2018.

The Committee was advised that it was the intention to apply the Code to the Council's 2017/2018 Effectiveness Review.

The Committee was further advised that the Code would be reviewed every three years.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance, as attached as Appendix One to the report, is approved.

9. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. Under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. Members considered the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determined that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

PART II

11. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER QUARTER 4 2016/2017

The Committee received a report on the latest Strategic Risk Register for Stevenage Borough Council and were advised of the latest developments on risk management issues.

The Committee was advised that the Register had been subject to an extensive review.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the latest Strategic Risk Register is noted.
2. That the developments on risk management issues are noted.

12. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

13. PART II MINUTES – AUDIT COMMITTEE – 28 MARCH 2017

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 March 2017 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CHAIR